

## **Three Generations of Business**

### **Thompson's Sanitary Service, Inc.**

#### **Newport, Oregon**

Rob Thompson and Ken Riley, owners of Thompson's Sanitary Service, Inc., were named the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2006 Jeffrey Butland Family-Owned Business of the Year. The award was presented to Rob and Ken by Leon Milobar, District Director of the SBA Portland District Office, at a lunch forum hosted by the Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce on Friday, May 19th.

Ken Thompson and his brother Neal started Thompson Sanitary Service, Inc. in 1963 when they won a competitive bid for the city franchise for the garbage collection in Newport. The Thompson brothers purchased the old equipment from the former service provider, which consisted of two 15-year-old Dodge open top dump trucks. Ken and his wife Agnes purchased their first Leach rear load garbage truck at that time.



Ken Riley, Bob Thompson & Rob Thompson

Two years later Ken and Agnes bought out Neal. They ran the business until 1981. At that time Ken and Agnes sold the company to Bob, their son, and his wife Sandi.

Originally the business operated out of a 9x10 ft. room in Ken and Agnes' home. The business has relocated several times because of growth, and in 2001 operations were moved into a new 6,400 square-foot office off of Highway 101. Bob and Sandi have retired and the business is now actively managed by Ken Riley and Rob Thompson, members of the third generation.

Over the years the industry has gone through many changes. One year ago the family made a fundamental change to the collection of all its recycling on route for its customers, which required a very large investment of capital into trucks and roll carts. The customers responded in a tremendous way. As a result the business has grown and improved profitability while maintaining stable rates to its customer base, and the retention of 25 family wage jobs.

This is the first year the family-owned business award has been given by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Thompson's Sanitary was nominated for the award by Oregon Coast Community College Small Business Development Center.